

Message Text

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TO USMISSION OECD PARIS PRIORITY

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SUBJECT: PROPOSED TRANSFER OF TOURISM ACTIVITY TO PART II
OF OECD BUDGET

1. WE OPPOSE THE PROPOSAL TO TRANSFER THE FUNDING FOR THE
TOURISM COMMITTEE FROM PART I TO PART II OF THE OECD
BUDGET. MISSION SHOULD DRAW ON FOLLOWING ARGUMENTS IN
DISCUSSING THIS QUESTION IN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND COUN-
CIL:

A. FULL OECD MEMBERSHIP IN THE TOURISM COMMITTEE ENHANCES
THE VALUE OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK NOT ONLY FOR THE U.S.
BUT FOR ALL PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES. THE MORE COUNTRIES
THAT PARTICIPATE, THE GREATER THE AMOUNT OF DATA THAT ARE
AVAILABLE TO DESCRIBE THE MARKET AS A WHOLE. THIS IS
PARTICULARLY USEFUL IN THE AREA OF STATISTICAL INFORMATION
PERTAINING TO ARRIVALS, TRENDS, AND FORECASTS. AS TRAVEL
AMONG THE OECD MEMBER COUNTRIES REPRESENTS APPROXIMATELY
80 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL WORLD MARKET, THE STATISTICS

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PROVIDE A BASIC INPUT FOR THE UNITED STATES IN ASSESSING

TRENDS IN TOURISM AND IN EVALUATING THE POSITION OF TOURISTS FLOWS TO THE U.S. VIS-A-VIS THE MAJOR TOURIST GENERATORS AND RECEIVERS. HOWEVER, IF ONLY SOME OECD MEMBER COUNTRIES BELONG TO THE COMMITTEE, DATA AGGREGATION COULD HAVE FAR LESS VALUE AND MIGHT, PERHAPS, BE MEANING-LESS.

B. IN ADDITION, THE OECD TOURISM COMMITTEE STRIVES TO RECONCILE INCONSISTENT MEMBER COUNTRIES' TOURISM STATISTICS AND PROVIDE COMPARATIVE DATA. THUS, A MEMBER COUNTRY CAN DETERMINE ITS RANK OR POSITION IN A NUMBER OF AREAS SUCH AS ARRIVALS, RECEIPTS, AND THE RELATIONSHIP OF TOURISM SPENDING TO GNP RELATIVE TO OTHER MEMBER COUNTRIES. THESE KINDS OF ANALYSES ARE OF GREAT VALUE TO THE U.S. IF THEY WERE NOT AVAILABLE FROM OECD, USTS WOULD HAVE TO TRY TO OBTAIN THE DATA DIRECTLY FROM THE MEMBER COUNTRIES.

C. FINALLY, TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETINGS FACILITATE DISCUSSION OF TOURISM POLICIES AND THE EXCHANGE OF MEMBER COUNTRIES' RESEARCH. THIS IS PARTICULARLY VALUABLE WHEN ALL MEMBER COUNTRIES PARTICIPATE IN THE DISCUSSIONS.

2. IF, HOWEVER, OTHER OECD MEMBER COUNTRIES DO NOT SEE THE VALUE OF THE TOURISM COMMITTEE WORK AND CANNOT JUSTIFY THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF IT, WE WILL NOT OPPOSE THEIR WITHDRAWAL (AND THE CONSEQUENT TRANSFER OF THE TOURISM ACTIVITY TO PART II OF THE BUDGET) WE WOULD REGRET SUCH ACTION, AS WE FEEL THE VALUE OF THE COMMITTEE'S DATA AND DISCUSSIONS WILL BE DIMINISHED AS A RESULT.

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